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Political Studies

Inside Black America

The Message of the Black Vote in the 1984 Elections

Thomas E. Cavanagh

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Joint Center for Political Studies
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Foreword

In August of 1984, the Joint Center and the Gallup Organization released the results of their poll of over 900 blacks and 1,300 whites on a wide range of political questions. Since then, speculation on what blacks think about life and government in America has been growing. One poll after another has cropped up—each purporting to paint a true picture of black attitudes. To the best of our knowledge, however, the JCPS/Gallup survey upon which *Inside Black America* is based represents one of the most extensive samplings of black and white political attitudes ever attempted and should therefore be accorded more than passing interest.

But *Inside Black America* is not simply a restatement of the statistical data. Thomas E. Cavanagh, JCPS research associate from 1982-1984 and senior research associate from 1984-1985, delves behind the numbers and the survey responses to provide a penetrating glimpse of the underlying reasons for, and ramifications of, those responses.

Because the JPCS/Gallup poll aroused so much interest, the Joint Center plans to commission an annual survey of black and white attitudes on political, social, and economic issues. Such polls, we feel, when conducted professionally and based on sound methodology, can serve as an essential guide to policy-makers and others working to build a more equitable America. It is in that spirit that we offer you this unprecedented look *Inside Black America*.

Eddie N. Williams
December 1985
Washington, D.C.

Introduction

For black politics, the year 1984 was marked by great achievement and great disappointment. Jesse Jackson's campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination was by far the most successful such campaign ever run by a black candidate, in terms of votes received and delegates elected. Black registration and turnout continued the surge begun in 1982, and the number of blacks elected to local office increased substantially. In addition, black voters provided the margin of victory for Democratic candidates in three U.S. Senate races and upward of half a dozen U.S. House contests. Nonetheless, blacks had only a marginal impact on the outcome of the presidential election. Despite their widespread opposition to the performance and priorities of the administration of President Ronald Reagan, they could not prevent his landslide reelection, given his popularity with the white electorate.

In the white-majority context of public opinion in America, the distinctive opinions of blacks on a variety of political and social issues can easily be lost sight of.

In the white-majority context of public opinion in America, the distinctive opinions of blacks on a variety of political and social issues can easily be lost sight of; when the attitudes of blacks differ from those of the broader society, the former are often given little or no attention by policy-makers, the media, or the public at large. To help remedy that situation and explore the contours of black opinion in depth, the Joint Center for Political Studies (JCPS), in consultation with the Gallup Organization, developed a survey in the summer of 1984; interviews were conducted during the last weekend in July and the first weekend in August. Whereas most national samples contain only 100 to 150 blacks, the JCPS survey included 902 blacks, permitting a much more detailed and reliable view than samples normally provide of the attitudes not only of the black population as a whole but also of subgroups within the black population. In addition, the sample contained 1,365 whites, who were asked to respond to a virtually identical questionnaire. Thus, cross-racial as well as intraracial comparisons were possible.

This study uses the JCPS/Gallup data and the data from two other polls[1] to go beneath the surface of the black vote during the 1984 campaign, to explore underlying relationships in the structure of black and white attitudes, to explain recent political developments, and to speculate on the role of race in American politics in the years to come.

We begin by comparing black and white perspectives on contemporary American political and economic developments, in general, and on the Reagan administration, in particular. We then examine the forces that were most instrumental in mobilizing the black vote, or sections of it—not only antipathy to the administration, but also Jesse Jackson's campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination, gender, and attempts to target the black electorate.

The forces that were most instrumental in mobilizing the black vote, or sections of it, [were] not only antipathy to the administration, but also Jesse Jackson's campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination, gender, and attempts to target the black electorate.

Since blacks were relatively united in their opposition to the administration, we explore political differences within the black community by focusing on the largest group of black voters—the Democrats—and tracing the divergences within that group during the campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination (we also compare the preferences of black Democrats with those of white Democrats). Then, to understand the partisan distinctions across the black community—what makes some blacks Democrats, others Republicans, and still others Independents—we analyze black party affiliation. Finally, to round off our discussion of blacks and politics in 1984, we look at the November elections: why did blacks vote as they did in the presidential race, what effect did their votes have in electing white candidates to the Senate and House, and what degree of success did blacks have as candidates for office.

We conclude by exploring some major questions of race and politics. Where the black presence in politics has become stronger, has a white backlash materialized? How receptive does white America seem to the idea of electing a black to national office? And by what means can blacks maximize their future political influence?

[1]One was a survey with 384 blacks and 930 whites that Gordon S. Black Corporation conducted in late September and early October 1984 for *USA Today*. The other was the 1984 CBS-*New York Times* exit poll of 801 blacks, 8,010 whites, and 219 Hispanics.

Two Different Americas

An exploration of the black vote during the 1984 campaign has to begin with the incontrovertible fact that blacks and whites today face highly different sets of objective circumstances and experience highly different lives. As *Washington Post* journalist Juan Williams wrote not long ago,

> To be a black American in 1985 is to be trapped in a no man's land. The trap is to listen to whites happily tell you that the battle against racism has been won, the world is colorblind, you can compete and make it on your own.
>
> The reality, to black eyes, however, is to know that while life is better than 20 years ago, you still are treated, seen and identified on the basis of your color. (Williams, 1985)

Blacks and whites are living in two different Americas.

Thus, blacks and whites are living in two different Americas. Whites perceive victory in a struggle against racism that blacks feel has only begun.

Given such disparate initial premises, it should come as no surprise that white and black evaluations of the current American scene are starkly different. The JCPS survey found that whereas 48 percent of whites were satisfied "with the way things are going in the U.S. at this time" and 43 percent were dissatisfied, blacks were dissatisfied by a margin of 79 to 14 percent. On the question of racial progress in particular, fully 68 percent of whites thought that the situation of blacks had improved in the past five years against only 4 percent who believed it had gotten worse, but among the blacks surveyed, almost as many thought things had gotten worse (30 percent) as believed they had gotten better (37 percent). Moreover, when whites were asked, "Do you think most white people want to see blacks get a better break, or do they want to keep blacks down?" they inclined toward the favorable view of their own motivations by 43 to 18 percent. Blacks, however, saw whites as desiring continued racial dominance, by a margin of 40 to 23 percent. It is not surprising, therefore, that 74 percent of blacks felt that racial progress was too slow.

The gap in perspective was equally inevitable, and even more dramatic, in the area of political beliefs and agendas. When asked to name the three most important issues of the presidential campaign (Table 1),[2] blacks cited unemployment (65 percent), government programs to help the poor (45 percent), and civil rights (38 percent). Whites divided almost evenly among unemployment (42 percent), the federal deficit (42 percent), and inflation (40 percent); for them civil rights was virtually a non-issue (only 6 percent of whites named it as one of the three major issues). Thus, blacks and whites differ not only on the substance of public policy, but on the most basic issue of all: the nature of the political agenda. And it is clear that blacks' priorities impel them in a politically liberal direction, whereas whites' weighting of the issues implies a more conservative outlook.

Blacks and whites differ not only on the substance of public policy, but on the most basic issue of all: the nature of the political agenda.

An examination of recent economic trends sheds light on the source of those political differences. The most dramatic economic recovery of the postwar period has left many blacks feeling like spectators rather than participants. The blacks in the JCPS survey said they were worse off financially than they had been four years earlier, by a margin of 43 to 30 percent; the whites in the survey said they were better off, by a margin of 46 to 25 percent. This divergence in feeling has a factual underpinning. During the severe recession of 1982, black unemployment topped 20 percent, and it continues to hover at a Depression-era level of 15 percent even though white unemployment has returned to a "near-normal" level of about 6 percent. The cutbacks in social spending enacted during the first year of the Reagan administration—cutbacks in such programs as food stamps, children's nutrition, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Administration, and supplemental unemployment insurance—hit black Americans especially hard. The result: black income levels were falling while white income levels were rising (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 1984).

Many blacks feel that those differences in economic condition are being aggravated by the Reagan administration. Indeed, the black view of Ronald Reagan has

[2]All tables appear at the end of their respective sections.

been decidedly different from the white view (Table 2). At the same time that mainstream media, scholars, and pundits and many segments of white America generally were hailing Reagan as a "great" or "near-great" president, blacks' negative evaluations of him were impressive in their unity: with whites in the JCPS/Gallup survey approving of Reagan's job performance by 57 to 32 percent, blacks disapproved by the enormous margin of 82 to 8 percent. In fact, the single-digit job approval ratings that Reagan received from blacks throughout his first term were about the lowest ever recorded for a president among any identifiable group during the 50-year history of public opinion polling. Opposition to Reagan extended across virtually every sector of black society and across virtually every area of presidential responsibility. Even black Republicans disapproved of Reagan's performance by 73 to 23 percent!

The most dramatic economic recovery of the postwar period has left many blacks feeling like spectators rather than participants.

It is therefore not surprising to find that the demographic categories from which Reagan received strong support among white voters yielded him only weak support among blacks (Table 3). Black households with an annual income over $25,000 gave him an approval rating of only 13 percent; suburban blacks, 9 percent; blacks with a college education, 11 percent; and blacks in a business or professional career, only 7 percent. Most remarkably, only 13 percent of the blacks who favored cutting back on government social spending approved of Reagan's performance. Why? Because of a feeling, even among those favoring such cutbacks, that the specific form of the changes made by the administration had been unfair to blacks and the poor. Thus, 83 percent of blacks felt that "Reagan's policies have been harmful to blacks." Of this group, 30 percent (or one-quarter of the total black sample) felt that "this is because the Reagan administration wants to work *against* the progress of blacks." Almost as disturbing is the finding that 64 percent of the blacks who perceived harm in the policies of Reagan's administration felt that his officials "don't care one way or the other."

A massive 94 percent of blacks disapproved of Reagan's handling of "the situation of poor people"—his worst rating in any single category. An even higher 97 percent of the blacks favoring budget cutbacks

disapproved of Reagan on this measure. Thus, whatever appeal fiscal conservatism might otherwise have to the black community is being undercut by the perception that the bulk of the cuts is being deliberately imposed on the poor. The experience of poverty has been so endemic in the black community that even those blacks who have "made it" economically continue to empathize with the plight of those who have not.

Many blacks feel that . . . differences in economic condition are being aggravated by the Reagan administration.

The experience of discrimination has been just as endemic, which accounts for the high priority still placed upon civil rights policies by blacks, who disapproved of Reagan's record on civil rights by 82 to 10 percent. Here again, even fiscally conservative blacks felt no sympathy for the president: those favoring budget cutbacks disapproved of Reagan on civil rights by 84 to 10 percent.

On specifically "black" issues, blacks took a particularly dim view of Reagan's record. Many were offended by his obvious reluctance to support the extension of the Voting Rights Act or to establish a federal holiday in honor of Martin Luther King's birthday. The administration's attempts to alter the interpretation and enforcement of affirmative action guidelines, school desegregation orders, and other aspects of civil rights policy led many blacks to doubt the depth of Reagan's commitment to racial equality. Reagan's old stump speeches about "welfare queens" and "young bucks" receiving food stamps also left an ugly legacy: 72 percent of blacks considered Reagan "prejudiced," an impression that, again, cuts across virtually every sector of black society.

These cross-racial comparisons suggest that America is a society in which blacks and whites have different needs and expectations. The two races apparently view neither the past, nor the present, nor the future in the same terms, and American society seems to be dominated by complacent and indifferent whites who, for the most part, neither comprehend nor share the concerns of most blacks.

Table 1

Three Most Important Campaign Issues, by Race

	Blacks	Whites
Unemployment	65%	42%
Government programs to help the poor	45	42
Civil rights of minority groups	38	6
Inflation	28	40
Protecting American jobs	26	31
Quality of public education	16	15
Size of federal budget deficit	14	42
Nuclear weapons policy	13	31
Defense spending	10	24
Relations with Soviet Union	9	26
Relations with South Africa	5	1
Role in Central America	4	9
(Number Surveyed)	(902)	(1,365)

Source: JCPS/Gallup survey.

Table 2

Ratings of Reagan's Performance, by Issue and Race

	Blacks		Whites	
	Approve	Disapprove	Approve	Disapprove
Overall job performance	8%	82%	57%	32%
Performance on the following issues:				
The situation of poor people in the U.S.	3	94	31	56
Unemployment	7	89	52	40
The situation in Central America	7	66	29	43
The federal government's budget deficit	8	77	24	59
Economic conditions in the U.S.	10	85	54	38
The civil rights of minority groups	10	82	48	29
Foreign policy	11	67	41	40
Relations with the Soviet Union	13	63	47	37
(Number surveyed)	(902)		(1,365)	

Source: JCPS/Gallup survey.

Table 3

Ratings of Reagan's Performance, by Social and Political Category, Controlling for Race

	Blacks		Whites	
	Approve	Disapprove	Approve	Disapprove
Total	8%	82%	57%	32%
Men	11	78	58	33
Women	4	85	56	32
Age 18-29	10	81	57	32
Age 30-49	6	83	59	30
Age 50 and over	9	80	54	35
East	12	77	55	31
Midwest	5	87	53	32
South	5	83	62	28
West	14	76	56	39
Central city	7	84	52	39
Suburban	9	78	62	26
Rural	9	79	54	35
Not high school grad	6	81	48	35
High school grad	7	84	58	31
College	11	80	60	33
Under $12,000	5	84	45	41
$12,000 to $24,999	8	85	56	32
$25,000 and over	13	73	64	29
Professional/business	7	83	61	30
Clerical/sales	11	81	58	27
Blue collar	8	81	57	34
Unemployed	6	84	52	35
Owner	7	82	58	31
Renter	8	81	52	35
Democrat	6	86	29	60
Independent	14	67	55	30
Republican	23	73	89	5
Increase social spending	7	83	43	46
Cut social spending	13	76	71	21
Modern values*	8	82	47	41
Traditional values*	7	80	62	27

*Respondents were asked to label their views on sex, morality, family life, and religion.
Source: JCPS/Gallup survey.

The Political Mobilization of Black America, 1982-1984

For the most part, blacks have participated considerably less than whites in the American political process, partly because they have felt that their participation makes little difference; but as political scientists have long noted, heightened racial consciousness may overcome that barrier. In their oft-cited study of political participation, Sidney Verba and Norman Nie find that "consciousness of race as a problem or a basis of conflict appears to bring those blacks who are [racially] conscious up to a level of participation equivalent to that of whites" (1972, p.158; see also Collins, 1980; London and Hearn, 1977; Olsen, 1970; and Shingles, 1981). Thus, the effects of the complex of attitudes described in the previous chapter are entirely predictable. With the vast majority of blacks perceiving the policies of the Reagan administration as a threat to the most vital interests of the black community *as a community,* one would expect to find a major surge in black participation in a variety of political activities. And indeed, such a surge has occurred. Black political participation is at its highest crest since the great breakthroughs of the 1960s.

The demographic categories from which Reagan received strong support among white voters yielded him only weak support among blacks.

Between September 25 and October 5, 1984, Gordon S. Black Corporation conducted a survey of political attitudes for *USA Today* that included an oversample of blacks. The survey found that 62 percent of blacks, as opposed to 44 percent of whites, said they had increased their interest in politics since 1980. As a result, blacks were more likely than whites to have engaged in a variety of campaign activities, such as attending a political rally (30 percent of blacks versus 17 percent of whites), distributing candidates' literature (17 percent versus 8 percent), and, most dramatically, helping to register voters (30 percent versus 9 percent).

The biennial Census Bureau surveys confirm the findings of the *USA Today* survey. The Census Bureau

recorded a large increase in black registration and turnout during the four years of Reagan's first administration (Table 4). During that period, reported black registration surged from 9.8 million to 12.2 million, raising the black registration rate (as a percentage of voting-age population) from 60.0 to 66.3 percent (the highest level ever recorded), for a gain of 6.3 percentage points.[3] During the same four-year period, reported white registration increased only marginally, from 68.4 to 69.6 percent (or 1.2 percentage points). Those data alone strongly suggest a race-specific cause; as Verba and Nie would predict, a period of heightened black awareness of racial differences in the impact of government policy is marked by participation rates among blacks that come close to rates among whites. Looked at another way, the gap between black and white registration rates shrank from 8.4 percentage points in 1980 to only 3.3 percentage points in 1984, the smallest such gap ever recorded in a national election. Most remarkably, the black portion of the net total increase in registration between 1980 and 1984 was 21.4 percent—double the black portion of the total voting-age population.

The two races apparently view neither the past, nor the present, nor the future in the same terms.

The increase in black registration is roughly paralleled by the increase in reported black turnout. According to the Census Bureau surveys, black turnout jumped from 8.3. million in 1980 to 10.3 million in 1984. Expressed as a percentage of the voting-age population, black participation increased from 50.5 to 55.8 percent, a gain of 5.3 percentage points. White turnout, like white registration, showed only a marginal increase (from 60.9 to 61.4 percent, a gain of only 0.5 percentage points). As a result, the gap between black and white turnout rates narrowed dramatically, from 10.4 percentage points in 1980 to only 5.6 percentage points in 1984, the lowest such gap ever recorded (Table 5). Moreover, the narrowing of the participation gap was relatively uniform throughout the country. And black turnout as a percentage of registration remained constant at 84.2 percent. Given the size of the registration increase, the maintenance of a relatively high "yield" of registrants at the polls

[3] "Reported" results are results based on respondents' own reports rather than on verifications of actual figures.

speaks well for the get-out-the-vote efforts in November 1984.

The black share of the national vote was higher than ever before, exceeding one-tenth of the total electorate for the first time. Blacks also accounted for a disproportionate share of first-time voters: the CBS-*New York Times* exit poll found that 11 percent of black voters were casting a ballot for the first time, compared with only 7 percent of white voters.

The Impact of the Jackson Campaign

According to Jesse Jackson, one of the main goals of his presidential campaign was to induce the disenfranchised to register, thus vesting them with a kind of power they had not had before. Some observers, though, have been skeptical about the degree to which his campaign in fact contributed to electoral mobilization. The analysis below demonstrates that Jackson's presidential campaign was clearly one of the major spurs to black participation.

Black political participation is at its highest crest since the great breakthroughs of the 1960s.

Certainly, during Jackson's primary campaign black turnout surged dramatically. According to CBS News data, turnout in black precincts more than doubled in the New York State primary; and in all the other states for which data were reported, black turnout increased from 14 to 87 percent (Cavanagh and Foster, 1984, Table 2, p. 17). Employing exit survey data, the *New York Times* estimated that 3.05 million blacks voted in the Democratic primaries, representing 18 percent of the 16.94 million Democratic primary voters (Clymer, 1984).

To demonstrate the impact of the Jackson campaign on black political participation, we analyzed the JCPS/Gallup survey data with a statistical procedure known as maximum likelihood estimation, or logit analysis.[4] To determine the causes of the current surge in black

[4]For the following explanation of logit analysis, we appreciate the help of Linda F. Williams, senior research associate at the Joint Center. And for an exceptionally lucid discussion of how to perform logit analysis and why it is the preferred choice in analyzing categorical data (classes of data that have no lower or higher rank order or arithmetic characteristics), we recommend Aldrich and Nelson, 1984.

registration, we used logit analysis to predict the probability that a person who had never registered as of November 1982 (according to self-report) would register to vote between that date and the time of the survey in late July 1984. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 6.

To understand the table, one needs to understand that the reported coefficient estimate (column 1) measures the relationship between, on the one hand, potential determinants[5] of first-time black registration (such as level of political interest, view of Reagan's reelection chances, support for Jackson and for a separate black party, and age) and, on the other hand, reported actual first-time registration. For example, the relatively large coefficient estimate for age for those 18-24 shows, as one might expect, that younger people are disproportionately likely to be first-time registrants. (Only those relationships that produced relatively large coefficients are reported in Table 6.) Because the analysis is based on a sample rather than on the population as a whole, columns 2 and 3 are necessary: standard error (column 2) tells us what variation in the estimates is likely to arise from one sample to another, and the chi-square statistics in column 3 report the strength of the relationship and whether it is statistically significant—that is, whether its occurrence was not due to chance. Column 4 gives the number of people in the sample in each given category. The larger the number in column 3, the stronger the relationship between potential determinants of first-time registration and actual reported first-time registration, and (if an asterisk appears by the number in column 3) the greater the likelihood that the relationship would be found in the population as a whole.

The Census Bureau recorded a large increase in black registration and turnout during the four years of Reagan's first administration.

The estimate in the category "support for Jackson" demonstrates that Jesse Jackson's bid for the nomination spurred black registration, which was one of the prime objectives of his candidacy. (Table 9, discussed below, lists selected groups important in influencing black and all new registrants to register; it provides further evidence of the importance of Jackson's campaign in stimulating black registration.)

[5]A determinant is a statistically significant predictor of a dependent variable.

Parenthetically, Table 6 also demonstrates that blacks who believed Reagan's reelection to be "fairly likely" were more likely to register for the first time than those considering his reelection "very likely," but both groups produced more registrants than those who believed that a Reagan reelection was relatively unlikely (the implicit control group in the sample). Similarly, blacks with only a "fair amount" of interest in politics were more likely to become first-time registrants than were those with a "great deal" of interest. Presumably, this indicates that recent mobilization efforts succeeded in registering a considerable number of blacks whose attachments to the political system had previously been marginal. The disproportionate presence among the first-time registrants of blacks who favored a separate black political party likewise indicates the success of recent efforts among the previously marginal.

The Gender Gap

Another factor in the increased number of black voters is somewhat harder to understand. The gender gap, black and white, has received much attention in the popular press, where the phrase refers to the tendency of women to support Democratic and liberal candidates for office more than men do. Less noted but equally intriguing is the growing gender gap in the rate of voter participation, independent of the direction of the vote per se. By 1984, the trend was unmistakable: the turnout rate of women (expressed as a percentage of voting-age population) was 1.8 percentage points higher than that of men, according to the 1984 Census Bureau survey.

The gap between black and white turnout rates narrowed dramatically [in1984].

For many years after the enfranchisement of women, participation rates for women lagged well behind those for men. But the traditional "passive" female role with regard to political participation has broken down in the face of two important demographic trends: the passage of women of the presuffrage era out of the electorate, and the enormous increase in women's participation in the labor force. Together, these trends probably suffice to explain the elimination of the traditional male "advantage" in turnout rates (Andersen, 1975). The surge of women into white-collar occupations, which are noted for higher turnout, has been

an especially important stimulus to the participation of women (Cavanagh, 1981).

During the 1980s, female participation has exceeded male participation. In the CBS-*New York Times* exit poll sample, 9 percent of the women (as opposed to 7 percent of the men) were voting for the first time, and 57 percent of all first-time voters were women. Even more striking, the turnout rate of women increased by 1.4 percentage points over the 1980 level, whereas male turnout *declined* by 0.1 percentage points. The controversies over abortion, America's military posture, and cutbacks in social spending may have not only shaped many women's political allegiances, but also heightened the perceived importance of politics. The nomination of Geraldine Ferraro for vice president may also have contributed to the political mobilization of women.

Jackson's presidential campaign was clearly one of the major spurs to black participation.

The breakdown of women's turnout rates by race introduces a puzzle, for the timing and extent of the gender gap in participation vary significantly by race. As early as 1964, the turnout of black women was only 1.1 percentage points less than that of black men, and black women under 35 years of age were already outvoting black men (Table 7). By 1984, the turnout of black women was a full 7.5 percentage points higher than that of black men, and among blacks under the age of 21, the gender gap had expanded to a remarkable 11.3 percentage points: the turnout of black men in the youngest age bracket increased by 4.1 percentage points between 1980 and 1984, but the turnout of black women under 21 shot up by 16.6 percentage points. Among blacks over 74, the turnout of women has skyrocketed since 1964, going from 26.9 to 55.0 percent at a time when turnout among the overall electorate has declined by about 10 percentage points. During the Reagan years alone, the turnout of black women over 74 has increased by 10.3 percentage points.

Among whites and Hispanics, the gender gap in voter participation is much more recent and less pronounced. In 1984 the female "advantage" in turnout rates was only 1.2 percentage points for whites (Table 8) and 1.0 percentage points for Hispanics. In the younger age brackets, white female turnout exceeded

male turnout by about 4 percentage points; but among whites over the age of 74, male turnout was still 11.8 percentage points higher than female turnout. Moreover, among both sexes, the only whites whose participation rates increased significantly during the Reagan years were the elderly, which suggests that anxiety over the future of Social Security may be stimulating the participation of older people generally.

Clearly, something important is going on. To some extent, the relatively large gender difference in black participation can be accounted for by the distinctive distribution of the black female labor force, which is more white collar and less blue collar than the black male labor force. However, even within the same occupational categories, black women display somewhat higher turnout rates than black men (Cavanagh, 1983, Table 8).

Another possible explanation is that group consciousness may stimulate the participation of black women even more than it does that of black men. Sandra Baxter and Marjorie Lansing have suggested that black women perceive discrimination on the basis of both race and sex and therefore feel threatened by a "double whammy" (1983, ch. 5). Precisely this sense of gender consciousness appears to have inspired the founders of the newly organized National Political Congress of Black Women.

Recent mobilization efforts succeeded in registering a considerable number of blacks whose attachments to the political system had previously been marginal.

The difficulty with that explanation of the black gender gap, however, is the lack of any parallel finding among younger white women: if gender consciousness stimulated turnout, the effect would presumably not be race-specific. But contrary to expectation, Fulenwider (1981), employing attitudinal data, found that feminist beliefs were in fact a more potent determinant of political participation among black women than among white women. For the time being, therefore, the black woman voter remains what Baxter and Lansing have aptly termed "an enigma." This is an area in which additional research is badly needed.

The Importance of Targeting

The distinctions between the views of whites and minorities, of men and women, led various voter registration groups in 1984 to target one or another

of those categories of voters, hoping to benefit at the polls from increased turnout among presumed supporters. In particular, speculation was rife over the potential impact of blacks, Hispanics, and women in the presidential election. As was frequently noted, in 11 states with 134 electoral votes the number of unregistered blacks exceeded Reagan's 1980 margin of victory. The widespread opposition to Reagan's policies in the black community and the strategic location of unregistered blacks in the hotly contested Southern and industrial states combined to create an enormous incentive for mobilizing the black vote in 1984. Women, of course, were a potential factor in all 50 states, and both parties perceived likely benefits from courting the Hispanic vote.

By 1984, the turnout of black women was a full 7.5 percentage points higher than that of black men.

Reagan's first term witnessed the most dynamic grassroots registration activity among pro-Democratic constituencies in at least two decades, with careful organizational work done in areas where potential voters with politically salient demographic characteristics were concentrated—and particularly in minority communities. A survey of new registrants conducted by Peter D. Hart Research Associates for the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate (CSAE) (1985) found that 47 percent of blacks and 45 percent of Hispanics who registered in 1983 and 1984 said they had been registered in an organizational effort, as opposed to 30 percent of the whites who registered in those two years. If anything, these percentages understate the impact of organized registration efforts.

When asked which groups had an important influence on their decision to register, fully 67 percent of newly registered blacks in the CSAE study cited the Jackson campaign, confirming once again the importance of Jackson's candidacy for the mobilization of black voters. Blacks were also especially likely to cite the Democratic party (69 percent), black voter groups (53 percent), churches (49 percent), and civic groups (48 percent) as having influenced their decision to register. Table 9 compares black new registrants and all new registrants as to the groups that most influenced them.

The catalyst for organizational outreach seems to have been the easing of registration procedures. The CSAE survey found that only 28 percent of all new

registrants who signed up to vote in 1983 and 1984 did so at the office of the elections board or county clerk (Table 10). Over half of those who ascribed their registration to group activity enrolled at schools and libraries (37 percent) or at supermarkets (21 percent); among all new registrants, only 20 percent enrolled at schools and libraries and only 12 percent at supermarkets. Blacks and Hispanics were especially likely to make use of nontraditional registration sites. Only 20 percent of blacks and 23 percent of Hispanics enrolled at the office of a board of elections or county clerk, which means that more than three out of four newly registered minority voters signed up at a nontraditional registration site.

But the gains in voter participation among blacks and other minorities were counterbalanced by the registration of Republican target groups— suburbanites, military personnel, Christian fundamentalists, and others. As a result, Republicans won the registration race: first-time voters as a whole went for Reagan by 61 to 38 percent, according to the CBS-*New York Times* exit survey. The massive Reagan tide among white Americans simply overwhelmed the effects of the surge in participation among minority constituencies.

Reagan's first term witnessed the most dynamic grassroots registration activity among pro-Democratic constituencies in at least two decades.

The effectiveness of the Republicans' targeting is especially striking when one looks not at the way first-time voters cast their votes in 1984, but at their party affiliations. Even though first-time voters were supporting Reagan in about the same proportion that the electorate as a whole was, they were disproportionately likely to identify with the Republican party. According to the CBS-*New York Times* exit poll, new voters gave the GOP a 38 to 35 percent margin over the Democrats, whereas the electorate as a whole maintained a Democratic plurality.

As Cavanagh and Sundquist note,

> An upscale and therefore conservative and Republican bias is especially noticeable if one isolates first-time white voters, 75 percent of whom were under thirty years of age. Of this group, 47 percent were college educated, and 40 percent had incomes greater than $25,000, which is above the national median income of $24,600 in 1983. Fully 71 percent supported Reagan, and they gave the Republicans the edge over the Democrats in party identification by 44 to 21 percent. (1985, pp. 48-49)

A continuation of this trend for any length of time could permanently alter the two-party balance nationally. The Democrats had received a disproportionate share of the support of voters under the age of 30 in every presidential race from 1936 to 1980. The abrupt departure from that norm in 1984, along with the even more dramatic shift in party identification among younger whites, suggests that the Democrats' status as the majority party may no longer be secure (Cavanagh and Sundquist, 1985).

Table 4

Reported Voter Registration and Turnout, Total Population and Blacks, 1966-1984

	Registered						Voted		
	Total Population			Blacks					
	People of Voting Age (thousands)	People Registered (thousands)	Registration Rate (%)	People of Voting Age (thousands)	People Registered (thousands)	Registration Rate (%)	Total Voters (thousands)	Black Voters (thousands)	Black Voters as Percent of Total Voters
1966	112,800	79,295	70.3	10,533	6,345	60.3	62,518	4,398	7.0
1968	116,535	86,574	74.3	10,935	7,238	66.2	78,964	6,300	8.0
1970	120,701	82,181	68.1	11,472	6,971	60.8	65,888	4,992	7.6
1972	136,203	98,480	72.3	13,493	8,837	65.5	85,766	7,032	8.2
1974	141,299	87,889	62.2	14,175	7,778	54.9	63,164	4,786	7.6
1976	146,548	97,761	66.7	14,927	8,725	58.5	86,698	7,273	8.4
1978	151,646	94,883	62.6	15,636	8,921	57.1	69,587	5,812	8.4
1980	157,085	105,035	66.9	16,423	9,849	60.0	93,066	8,287	8.9
1982	165,483	105,996	64.1	17,624	10,422	59.1	80,310	7,581	9.4
1984	169,963	116,106	68.3	18,432	12,223	66.3	101,878	10,293	10.1

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Table 5

Reported Voter Participation as Percentage of Voting-Age Population, by Region and Race, 1964-1984

	Presidential Elections						Mid-Term Elections				
	1964	1968	1972	1976	1980	1984	1966	1970	1974	1978	1982
United States											
white	70.7	69.1	64.5	60.9	60.9	61.4	57.0	56.0	46.3	47.3	49.9
black	58.5	57.6	52.1	48.7	50.5	55.8	41.7	43.5	33.8	37.2	43.0
difference	12.2	11.5	12.4	12.2	10.4	5.6	15.3	12.5	12.5	10.1	6.9
North and West											
white	74.7	71.8	67.5	62.6	62.4	63.0	61.7	59.8	50.0	50.0	53.1
black	72.0	64.8	56.7	52.2	52.8	58.9	52.1	51.4	37.9	41.3	48.5
difference	2.7	7.0	10.8	10.4	9.6	4.1	9.6	8.4	12.1	8.7	4.6
South											
white	59.6	61.9	57.0	57.1	57.4	58.1	45.1	46.4	37.4	41.1	42.9
black	44.0	51.6	47.8	45.7	48.2	53.2	32.9	36.8	30.0	33.5	38.3
difference	15.5	10.3	9.2	11.4	9.2	4.9	12.2	9.6	7.4	7.6	4.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Table 6

Maximum Likelihood (Logit) Estimates of the Determinants of First-Time Black Registration

Variable	1 Coefficient Estimate	2 Standard Error	3 Chi-Square	4 Cases in Category
Intercept	.831	.314	6.99*	
Political interest				
great deal	.397	.268	2.19	(65)
fair amount	.677	.223	9.24*	(113)
Reagan reelection				
considered very likely	.122	.251	0.23	(70)
considered fairly likely	.538	.209	6.59*	(89)
Supporter of				
Jackson	.454	.216	4.43*	(185)
separate black party	.584	.204	8.18*	(54)
Age				
18-24	.888	.274	10.49*	(96)
25-34	.592	.278	4.54*	(99)

* p less than .05 (i.e., the relationship would occur by chance in only 5 out of 100 samples; thus, we can accept the relationship as valid).

Number of cases in sample = 299

74 degrees of freedom

Table 7

Reported Black Voter Turnout as Percentage of Voting-Age Population, by Age and Sex, 1964-1984

	1964	1968	1972	1976	1980	1984	Change 1980-84
All blacks	58.5%	57.6%	52.1%	48.7%	50.5%	55.8%	+ 5.3%
Males	59.1	58.2	52.1	47.2	47.5	51.7	+ 4.2
18-20 years	—	—	25.6	21.6	25.9	30.0	+ 4.1
21-24 years	39.1	35.5	38.4	31.6	30.9	40.6	+ 9.7
25-34 years	57.7	55.6	52.9	43.2	43.8	47.2	+ 3.4
35-44 years	63.7	64.5	57.8	51.5	54.1	55.9	+ 1.8
45-54 years	65.4	66.0	62.6	57.6	54.2	61.5	+ 7.3
55-64 years	65.0	64.8	62.1	65.3	60.1	66.3	+ 6.2
65-74 years	55.6	59.9	59.8	58.1	63.2	65.9	+ 2.7
75 years and over	44.7	51.1	49.4	54.7	54.6	57.9	+ 3.3
Females	58.0	57.1	52.1	49.9	52.8	59.2	+ 6.4
18-20 years	—	—	35.2	23.8	24.7	41.3	+16.6
21-24 years	49.3	41.5	38.0	33.1	36.5	47.1	+10.6
25-34 years	62.2	56.8	51.9	48.3	49.8	57.7	+ 7.9
35-44 years	61.9	64.7	60.8	56.6	62.6	65.2	+ 2.6
45-54 years	65.5	66.4	61.8	62.8	62.4	68.4	+ 6.0
55-64 years	59.7	60.0	61.1	64.6	68.0	67.8	- 0.2
65-74 years	47.6	53.6	53.9	56.1	66.1	64.0	- 2.1
75 years and over	26.9	31.8	32.5	45.3	44.7	55.0	+10.3

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Table 8

Reported White Voter Turnout as Percentage of Voting-Age Population, by Age and Sex, 1964-1984

	1964	1968	1972	1976	1980	1984	Change 1980-84
All whites	70.7%	69.1%	64.5%	60.9%	60.9%	61.4%	+0.5%
Males	73.4	71.2	65.6	61.5	60.9	60.8	-0.1
18-20 years	—	—	51.0	38.8	36.2	35.4	-0.8
21-24 years	53.3	53.0	51.2	46.9	43.5	42.9	-0.6
25-34 years	66.5	64.0	60.8	56.6	55.0	53.9	-1.1
35-44 years	75.5	72.7	67.2	64.3	64.3	63.7	-0.6
45-54 years	79.6	77.3	73.1	69.4	69.3	68.4	-0.9
55-64 years	80.1	78.6	73.4	72.7	74.1	74.0	-0.1
65-74 years	79.3	78.7	74.8	72.5	73.9	75.0	+1.1
75 years and over	68.4	68.1	67.7	63.9	67.2	69.6	+2.4
Females	68.2	67.2	63.4	60.5	60.9	62.0	+1.1
18-20 years	—	—	51.0	42.3	39.1	39.5	+0.4
21-24 years	51.6	52.6	53.8	49.1	46.5	45.8	-0.7
25-34 years	64.8	63.3	61.2	58.1	57.7	58.2	+0.5
35-44 years	72.8	71.0	68.0	65.9	67.2	66.2	-1.0
45-54 years	75.2	75.1	71.1	69.1	68.9	69.1	+0.2
55-64 years	74.2	73.8	70.2	68.7	70.8	72.5	+1.7
65-74 years	68.0	68.5	65.3	64.0	67.2	71.2	+4.0
75 years and over	51.3	51.1	50.6	50.8	53.9	57.8	+3.9

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Table 9

Selected Groups Important in Influencing Respondents to Register, Black and All New Registrants, 1984

	Black New Registrants	All New Registrants
Democratic party	69%	39%
Jesse Jackson's campaign	67	18
Peace or nuclear freeze group	66	54
Black voter group	53	19
Church or religious group	49	29
Civic group (e.g., League of Women Voters)	48	28
Environmentalist group	47	39
Moral Majority	42	28
Right-to-life group (i.e., anti-abortion group)	40	33
Republican party	38	49
Women's group	36	25
Candidate's organization	33	29
Professional group (e.g., group of doctors or lawyers)	32	16
Union	27	18

Source: Committee for the Study of the American Electorate (1985, Table 42).

Table 10

Reported Place of Registration for New Registrants, by Race, 1984

	All New Registrants	White	Black	Hispanic
Office of the county clerk or office of the board of elections	28%	31%	20%	23%
Registry of motor vehicles, public library, or school	25	25	31	13
Home	13	12	14	16
Supermarket or shopping area	12	10	13	22
Place of work	3	3	1	3
Church	3	3	5	2
Democratic or Republican headquarters	2	2	1	3
Meeting of an organization or group	2	2	2	3
Union hall	2	2	2	2
City or county unemployment office, food distribution center, or welfare office	2	2	5	2
Post office	1	1	—	2
By mail	1	1	1	2
County or state fair	1	1	—	2
Other	4	4	4	3
Not sure	1	1	1	2

Source: Committee for the Study of the American Electorate (1985, Table 3).

The Campaign for the Democratic Nomination: Black and White Evaluations of the Candidates

We have already seen that blacks and whites have different sets of political concerns and that blacks tend to be highly united in their response to the Reagan administration. This pattern suggests that the political differences within the black community are articulated along lines that do not correspond to the cleavages separating segments of the broader political community from one another. A way to explore the differences among blacks is to examine the preferences black Democrats had in the race for the 1984 presidential nomination. By definition, party identification is controlled in such an analysis, permitting us to zero in on the determinants of political preference within the largest body of black voters. The two areas in which preferences will be explored are choice of candidate and evaluation of the candidates' personal qualities. (In the latter area, it is interesting to contrast blacks' evaluations with whites'.)

The catalyst for organizational outreach seems to have been the easing of registration procedures.

The JCPS/Gallup sample included 687 black Democrats. Of those, 59 percent said they preferred Jackson for the nomination, and virtually all the remainder (or 34 percent) supported Mondale. Thus, even though for analytical purposes blacks who supported Jackson are distinguished from blacks who did not support Jackson, essentially the distinction is between those who supported Jackson and those who supported Mondale. The results of the logit analysis to predict support for Jackson are presented in Table 11.

Here we see the importance of racial consciousness as a determinant of black politial behavior. Blacks supporting Jackson were especially likely to feel that racial

progress is too slow, to support job preferences for blacks, and to support the idea of a separate black political party. In other words, racial consciousness stimulated support for Jackson, and support for Jackson (as we have seen) heightened black participation. Thus, racial consciousness was a major contributor to the surge in black participation in 1984.

In addition, Jackson received disproportionate support from younger blacks, from blacks whose family financial situation had failed to improve during Reagan's presidency, and from southern blacks (a possible indication of the success of the "Southern Crusade," Jackson's registration campaign in the South in the summer of 1983). Mondale was supported by older and less well educated blacks, who have traditionally provided a core of support to Democratic machine organizations in the older cities.

Racial consciousness was a major contributor to the surge in black participation in 1984.

The JCPS/Gallup survey included a long list of personal-attribute items on the candidates, and several of these—in particular, the extent to which each candidate was considered "knowledgeable" or "prejudiced"— proved significant in structuring the preferences of black Democrats. Fifteen percent of black Democrats (but 54 percent of white Democrats) considered Jackson "prejudiced," probably reflecting both the controversy about Jackson's use of the term "Hymie" to refer to Jews and the support given him by Minister Louis Farrakhan of the Nation of Islam. Much more important in structuring the aggregate preferences of black voters, however, were the qualities "clear on issues" and " a strong leader," two points on which blacks rated Jackson much more highly than they rated Mondale.

A closer look at the list of personal attributes reveals remarkable differences between blacks and whites in their perceptions of Jackson and Mondale (Table 12).[6] The first thing to note is Jackson's extraordinary popularity among blacks: he was thought to possess each positive attribute on the list by at least 84 percent of blacks, figures one might associate with the Second Coming. Any candidate receiving that set of scores from white voters would have easily defeated Reagan,

[6]Table 12 also includes data on black and white perceptions of Reagan; these are discussed in a later section.

who, in turn, is considered to have one of the strongest personality profiles of any modern president.

But among whites as well, Jackson's profile was surprisingly positive, and comparable to Mondale's in most respects. Whites in the aggregate found the two Democrats to be about equally hard-working and compassionate; they gave Jackson the edge in being exciting, getting things done, owing fewer favors, representing a new way of thinking, and being a strong leader. The differences that whites saw between the two men were just as noteworthy, however: Jackson was considered not only less knowledgeable, but also less fair, less likely to "care about people like me" (i.e., other whites), and far more prejudiced. This pattern of white reactions to a black candidate has ample precedent: whites commonly fear that "powerful blacks in high office will prove antiwhite and will openly discriminate against whites in jobs, services, and taxes" (Pettigrew, 1972, p. 106). The controversy over Jackson's anti-Semitic remarks merely added fuel to the fire.

Demographic characteristics have little relationship to black partisanship.

Table 11

Maximum Likelihood (Logit) Estimates of the Determinants of Jackson Support Among Black Democrats

Variable	Coefficient Estimate	Standard Error	Chi-Square	Cases in Category
Intercept	−.058	.310	0.03	
Family finances improved	−.252	.099	6.40*	(208)
Racial progress too slow	.327	.095	11.90*	(430)
Support job preferences	.247	.097	6.53*	(257)
Different Republican better than Reagan	−.248	.146	2.88	(77)
Separate black party	.410	.160	6.55*	(75)
Mondale: knowledgeable	−.391	.136	8.32*	(566)
Mondale: prejudiced	.342	.146	5.44*	(92)
Mondale: cares about people like me	−.373	.105	12.61*	(455)
Jackson: knowledgeable	.432	.178	5.93*	(622)
Jackson: prejudiced	−.321	.134	5.73*	(102)
Jackson: clear on issues	.358	.136	6.97*	(573)
Jackson: strong leader	.443	.168	6.93*	(617)
Age 18-24	.280	.157	3.18	(79)
Age 25-34	.274	.123	4.97*	(167)
Age 55 and over	−.250	.114	4.81*	(194)
South	.279	.094	8.71*	(279)
Less than high school	−.391	.136	9.43*	(215)

* p less than .05
N = 687
469 degrees of freedom

Table 12

Perceptions of Jackson, Mondale, and Reagan, by Race

	Jackson		Mondale		Reagan	
	B	W	B	W	B	W
Knowledgeable	89%	58%	79%	74%	51%	76%
Prejudiced	15	56	13	17	72	31
Hard-working	93	78	77	77	33	72
Exciting	88	53	38	16	15	34
Can get things done	87	49	58	37	36	71
Compassionate	89	57	66	58	14	54
Owes a lot of political favors	23	34	38	49	65	40
Cares about people like me	94	37	63	49	8	49
Clear on issues	84	33	66	41	23	51
Would be too quick to use military force	10	15	11	10	72	39
Represents a new way of thinking	89	62	57	30	20	31
Fair	92	46	78	66	16	64
A strong leader	89	45	62	32	29	69

Source: JCPS/Gallup survey.

The Determinants of Black Partisanship

The overwhelming allegiance of the black electorate to the Democrats is not new. The black vote has been heavily Democratic ever since the 1964 presidential election, which offered a choice between a Republican senator who had opposed the Civil Rights Act as unconstitutional and a Democratic president who had steered the legislation through Congress (Cavanagh, 1984). Some blacks do, however, identify themselves as Republicans and some as Independents, and the JPCS survey data make possible an analysis in some depth of the determinants of all three categories of black partisanship.

Virtually the only demographic variable separating black Democrats from other blacks is age.

In the JCPS/Gallup survey, 76 percent of blacks (687) declared themselves to be Democrats, and only 3 percent (32) said they were Republicans. So that there would be enough blacks who identified themselves as Republicans for purposes of statistical analysis, black Independents who reported leaning Republican were removed from the Independent category and added to the Republican, yielding a total of 51 blacks (6 percent of the survey population) who are treated as Republicans in the analysis of black party affiliation that follows.

Table 13 demonstrates that demographic characteristics have little relationship to black partisanship. Lower-status blacks and upper-status blacks are almost equally likely to identify with the Democratic party, whether the indicator of social status is education, income, or occupation. Similarly, men and women are equally likely to identify with the Democratic party, and region has little influence on black party identification. Virtually the only demographic variable separating black Democrats from other blacks is age: younger blacks are much less likely to be strong, or even weak, Democratic partisans. Thus, the socioeconomic divisions seen among whites are virtually absent in the black population.

Lower-status whites often identify with the Democratic party, which has traditionally supported programs to aid the poor and members of the working class, and it is not surprising to find the same pattern among lower-status blacks. To explain why upper-status blacks also favor the Democrats, however, one must look beyond class issues. Perhaps the unity between upper- and lower-status blacks in partisan identification can be traced to the personal experience of discrimination:

> Seventy percent of middle-class blacks, compared with only 50 percent of poor blacks, say that they have personally experienced discrimination in their lives. In fact, the experience of discrimination rises steadily with social class among blacks. The reason is easy to figure out: Higher status blacks have more contact with white people as theoretical co-equals. Therefore they have many more opportunities to feel discriminated against. (Lewis and Schneider, 1983, pp. 14-15)

Democratic partisanship is heavily influenced by liberal values and ideology.

Discrimination propels upper-status blacks into the Democratic party because they, like all blacks, tend to look to the public sector as a vital source of employment opportunities and a bulwark against discrimination, and it is the Democratic administrations that have favored increasing the size of the public sector and strictly enforcing affirmative action policies to alleviate the burden of discrimination. Thus, "different forces appear to operate at different levels of the black social structure to produce the same result: overwhelming support for the Democratic Party" (Lewis and Schneider, 1983, p. 59).

To explore in greater depth the relationship between socioeconomic and attitudinal factors, on the one hand, and black partisanship, on the other, we used logit analysis to predict the likelihood that blacks would identify themselves as Democratic, Republican, or Independent.[7] As we will see, this analysis reveals relationships that are fascinatingly asymmetrical, in the sense that each of the three categories of partisanship is predicted by a distinct set of variables (see Tables 14, 15, and 18).

[7]Since logit analysis employs dichotomous variables, party identification was dichotomized into Democratic or not-Democratic, Republican or not-Republican, and Independent or not-Independent.

Democrats

Democratic partisanship is heavily influenced by liberal values and ideology (Table 14). Thus, for example, blacks who favor cutting spending on the poor are less likely to identify with the Democratic party (as is indicated by the negative sign before the coefficient estimate in Table 14), and those who support modern social values are disproportionately likely to identify with the Democratic party. Somewhat surprisingly, however, black Democrats are disproportionately unlikely to support job preferences for blacks and disproportionately opposed to a separate black political party.

Some of the demographic relationships at first appear counterintuitive. Most of the research on voting behavior, because it concentrates on patterns of opinion among whites, has shown a strong correlation between partisanship and social class; that is, upper-status whites identify disproportionately with the Republican party and lower-status whites identify disproportionately with the Democratic party. The JCPS survey, however, as we discussed in connection with Table 13, shows that this relationship does not hold true for blacks. Black Democrats, although less likely than blacks on the average to be high school and college graduates, are more likely to be home owners, white-collar workers, and older. This indicates that, for reasons we have already discussed, the Democratic party rather than the Republican party is the mainstream political option for middle-class blacks.

The nation's black Republicans are an exceptionally issue-oriented voting bloc.

Republicans

Table 15 presents the determinants of black identification with the Republican party. We find that younger blacks are not only less strongly tied to the Democratic party, as we discussed above, but are also more likely to identify with the Republican party. This simply means, however, that of the blacks in the sample, a total of 13 percent of those who were under age 25—but only 4 percent of those 25 and over—were Republicans (including Independents who lean Republican). This trend faintly echoes the trend among whites: in recent years Republican identification

among younger whites has increased dramatically (see Cavanagh and Sundquist, 1985).

Of course, blacks who approve of Reagan's job performance are especially likely to be Republican (only 23 percent of black Republicans fall into this category, however). Blacks who believe that a different Republican administration will be more advantageous to blacks than the Reagan administration has been are also likely to be Republican. Thus, some black Republicans appear to be "keeping the faith," evidently believing that Reagan is an aberration or, at least, the worst that can be expected.

Data from the JCPS/Gallup poll reveal no statistically significant differences on the issues between blacks who identify with the Republican party and blacks who identify with the Democratic party. Another source—the CBS-*New York Times* exit poll—addressed certain issues not addressed by the JCPS survey, and the data from that poll reveal considerable, but far from enormous, partisan differences on the issues (Table 16).

Many black Independents may be potential Republicans.

In that poll, black Republicans gave higher priority to building up military strength (54 percent) than to negotiating a nuclear freeze (35 percent), whereas black Democrats preferred a nuclear freeze by 60 to 32 percent. The use of U.S. military force in Central America was supported by 51 percent of black Republicans but 37 percent of black Democrats. An increase in federal spending for the poor was supported by 49 percent of black Republicans but 76 percent of black Democrats. However, despite the oft-voiced hopes of New Right activists, among blacks there is no relationship between Republican partisanship and support for outlawing abortion; outlawing abortion is endorsed by 26 percent of black Republicans and 24 percent of black Democrats.

The percentages on spending for the poor and outlawing abortion suggest that the current GOP strategy of appealing to black conservatives by stressing cutbacks in the public sector and conservative views on social issues is not very likely to alter the partisan balance in the black community. Neither is the ap-

proach of attacking black leaders, for when black leaders are under attack, blacks tend to unite behind them. The *USA Today* survey found that Jesse Jackson was rated "very effective" or "somewhat effective" by 91 percent of blacks, who also gave high marks for effectiveness to the NAACP (82 percent), the Urban League (75 percent), and black officeholders in general (79 percent).

Black Republicans resolve the conflict between their Republican identification and their liberal views on the issues with wholesale defection or ticket-splitting in the voting booth. According to the CBS-*New York Times* exit survey, fully 43 percent of black Republicans voted for Mondale in 1984, and 40 percent voted for a Democrat in their local U.S. House race. The high rate of defection was heavily influenced by beliefs on issues.

The reluctance of blacks to vote for Reagan clearly stems from more than mere Democratic partisanship.

Indeed, the nation's black Republicans are an exceptionally issue-oriented voting bloc. One must be cautious because of the small number of black Republicans in the CBS-*New York Times* sample, but the differences in voting behavior among black Republicans as a correlate of issue preferences are large enough to be statistically significant. For example, 57 percent of the black Republicans who supported abortion rights without qualification backed Mondale, but only 28 percent of those who opposed such rights backed him. Black Republicans who supported a nuclear freeze cast 59 percent of their votes for Mondale, compared with 22 percent of those who placed a higher priority on a stronger military posture. Of the black Republicans who supported American military involvement in Central America, 66 percent backed Reagan; of those who opposed such involvement, only 36 percent backed him. The black Republican defections on economic issues are even more striking. Black Republicans who favored increased federal aid to the poor voted for Mondale at a rate of 63 percent, compared with only 13 percent of those who wanted either to keep such aid steady or to reduce it. And whereas 82 percent of the black Republicans who saw an improvement in the economy voted for Reagan, 79 percent of those who saw the economy as being the same or worse voted for Mondale (Table 17).

Independents

The allegiance of blacks to the Democratic party may be less strong than is often assumed.

The logit analysis of the JCPS/Gallup data on black Independents (Table 18) shows both interesting similarities between Independents and Republicans and interesting contrasts between Independents and Democrats—which is especially striking when one recalls that Independent Republicans were excluded from the group of Independents and combined with the Republicans. Black Independents are likely to be young, less well educated, and renters rather than home owners. They are also more conservative than the norm among blacks in both their economic and their social values. Although they disapprove of Reagan, they are disproportionately likely to believe that a different Republican would be an improvement for blacks and that the Democrats would not be.

In general, the data suggest that many black Independents may be potential Republicans who have shied away from the party because of a perception that it is anti-black—with the important qualification that black separatists are also (not surprisingly) likely to be Independents. A market clearly exists for the GOP to tap, but they must do it by articulating an authentically black perspective instead of recycling a neoconservative or New Right perspective that strikes most blacks as irrelevant or hostile to their concerns. Above all, the Republican party must demonstrate some genuine understanding of the continuing realities of poverty and racial discrimination.

Table 13

Black Party Identification, by Demographic Category

	(N)	Strong Democrat	Weak Democrat	Independent*	Republican*
All blacks	(902)	55%	21%	17%	6%
Men	(460)	55	19	19	7
Women	(442)	55	23	15	5
Age 18-29	(245)	35	22	30	10
Age 30-49	(371)	61	24	11	2
Age 50 and over	(278)	69	16	10	4
East	(253)	52	24	14	7
Midwest	(204)	57	16	22	4
South	(363)	57	20	16	6
West	(82)	52	27	12	7
Central city	(559)	56	20	17	5
Suburban	(225)	46	27	15	10
Rural	(118)	61	17	16	5
Not high school grad.	(295)	55	19	16	9
High school grad.	(360)	60	19	16	4
College	(244)	47	28	20	4
Under $12,000	(430)	59	18	16	6
$12,000 to $24,999	(270)	51	25	17	7
$25,000 and over	(156)	54	21	19	5
Professional/business	(134)	59	22	14	5
Clerical/sales	(107)	45	31	19	6
Blue collar	(365)	56	18	20	7
Housewife	(76)	47	28	15	4
Unemployed	(208)	61	17	14	6
Labor household	(186)	61	18	15	6
Owner	(433)	62	19	13	5
Renter	(463)	50	22	19	7

*Independents who lean Republican were classified as Republicans.
Source: JCPS/Gallup survey.

Table 14

Maximum Likelihood (Logit) Estimates of the Effects of Attitudinal and Demographic Characteristics on Democratic Party Identification Among Blacks

Variable	Coefficient Estimate	Standard Error	Chi-Square	Cases in Category
Intercept	.496	.335	2.19	
Reagan job approval	-.443	.144	9.44*	(70)
Different Republican better than Reagan	-.385	.126	9.33*	(113)
Democrats better than Reagan	.427	.094	20.56*	(519)
Jackson endorsement makes more likely to vote for Mondale	.200	.093	4.61*	(493)
Elderly have too little political influence	.189	.092	4.21*	(365)
Separate black party	-.258	.120	4.67*	(116)
Spend more on the poor	.186	.103	3.24	(652)
Cut spending on the poor	-.417	.203	4.20*	(39)
Support job preferences	-.196	.101	-3.79	(346)
Oppose job preferences	-.059	.128	0.21	(144)
Traditional social values†	-.102	.108	0.89	(252)
Modern social values†	.263	.111	5.56*	(264)
Age 18-24	-.725	.127	32.69*	(148)
Age 25-34	-.214	.119	3.24	(224)
Age 55 and over	.220	.134	2.69	(232)
Less than high school	-.343	.113	9.22*	(295)
College	-.206	.115	3.21	(289)
Home owner	.192	.093	4.29*	(433)
White collar	.225	.131	2.96	(153)

* p less than .05
N = 902
772 degrees of freedom
†Respondents were asked to label their views on sex, morality, family life, and religion.

Table 15

Maximum Likelihood (Logit) Estimates of the Effects of Attitudinal and Demographic Characteristics on Republican Party Identification Among Blacks

Variable	Coefficient Estimate	Standard Error	Chi-Square	Cases in Category
Intercept	1.188	.398	8.91*	
Reagan job approval	1.101	.179	37.82*	(70)
Different Republican better than Reagan	.582	.234	6.20*	(113)
Democrats better than Reagan	−.746	.191	15.20*	(519)
Age 18-24	.714	.225	10.08*	(148)
Age 25-34	.104	.259	0.16	(224)
Age 55 and over	.222	.236	0.88	(232)
Less than high school	.449	.200	5.03*	(295)
College	.131	.211	0.39	(289)

* p less than .05
N = 902
58 degrees of freedom

Table 16

Black Preferences on Issues, by Party Identification

	Democratic	Independent	Republican
Legalized abortion			
yes as is now	43%	38%	37%
only in extreme circumstances	30	35	30
no	24	17	26
Military priority			
nuclear freeze	60	48	35
strengthen defenses	32	37	54
Federal spending on poor			
increase	76	62	49
keep same	14	25	25
decrease	7	10	17
Central America			
send U.S. military forces	37	35	51
don't send U.S. military forces	50	52	36
Economy since 1980			
better	12	20	53
same	27	34	20
worse	59	37	22
(N)	(615)	(126)	(58)

Source: CBS-*New York Times* exit survey.

Table 17

Presidential Voting by Issue Preference, Black Republicans Only

	Reagan	Mondale	(N)
All black Republicans	51%	43%	(58)
Legalized abortion			
yes as is now	37	57	(21)
no/only in extreme circumstances	66	28	(32)
Military priority			
nuclear freeze	36	59	(20)
strengthen defenses	71	22	(31)
Federal spending on poor			
increase	34	63	(28)
keep same/decrease	79	13	(24)
Central America			
send U.S. military forces	66	30	(29)
don't send U.S. military forces	36	53	(21)
Economy since 1980			
better	82	11	(30)
same/worse	21	79	(24)

Source: CBS-*New York Times* exit survey.

Table 18

Maximum Likelihood (Logit) Estimates of the Effects of Attitudinal and Demographic Characteristics on Independent Identification Among Blacks

Variable	Coefficient Estimate	Standard Error	Chi-Square	Cases in Category
Intercept	.550	.325	2.86	
Reagan job approval	−.136	.175	0.60	(70)
Different Republican better than Reagan	.253	.131	3.71	(113)
Democrats better than Reagan	−.266	.097	7.58*	(519)
Separate black party	.266	.123	4.68*	(116)
Spend more for the poor	−.180	.107	2.86	(652)
Cut aid for the poor	.404	.202	4.00*	(39)
Traditional social values	.150	.112	1.80	(252)
Modern social values	−.286	.118	5.92*	(264)
Age 18-24	.566	.131	18.75*	(148)
Age 25-34	.224	.123	3.32	(224)
Age 55 and over	−.297	.148	4.03*	(232)
Home owner	−.235	.099	5.62*	(433)
Less than high school	.225	.118	3.62	(295)
College	.108	.115	0.88	(289)

* p less than .05
N = 902
429 degrees of freedom

The November Elections

Black partisanship is one thing; black voting behavior is another. In this section we analyze the determinants of black support for each of the two presidential candidates in the general election of November 1984; we note the Senate and House contests in which black voters gave winning white candidates their margins of victory; and we discuss the fate of blacks who were themselves candidates for office, and the prospects for future black candidates.

Behind the Black Presidential Vote

For the first time in years, the Democrats might find themselves actually having to compete seriously for black voters.

That black voters overwhelmingly supported Walter Mondale in the presidential election was hardly unexpected. A detailed explanation of why they did is made possible by the JCPS/Gallup poll.

Table 19 presents the logit analysis for the determinants of black support for Mondale versus black support for Reagan. All black voters who reported that they had not decided which candidate to support were excluded from the analysis. No data on demographics or on issues are presented, since the analysis revealed that neither demographic characteristics nor positions on the issues had an independent effect on the choice of candidate made by blacks. That is, the choices blacks made between Mondale and Reagan were not directly influenced either by positions on the issues or by such demographic characteristics as age, sex, income, region, education, and so forth. Rather, differences among blacks on the issues appear to have been totally incorporated into Reagan's job approval rating and party identification, and both of those, in turn, determined blacks' choice of candidate in the election of November 1984. Similarly, the effect of demographic differences within the black population on choice of candidate was totally obliterated by the sharp antipathy most blacks felt toward Reagan. In fact, even when the effects of partisan identification on candidate choice are eliminated, there is a very strong connec-

tion between the negative ratings blacks gave Reagan's performance and black support for Mondale. The reluctance of blacks to vote for Reagan clearly stems from more than mere Democratic partisanship. (Figure 1 on page 53 represents the relationships discussed in this paragraph.)

The two Reagan attributes that the logit analysis shows had most impact on black voting decisions are unusual as descriptions of a president, to say the least. Blacks on the average felt that Reagan was prejudiced and not hard-working, and both perceptions detracted significantly from his black support. Here again, differences between blacks and whites in evaluating the two parties' nominees show the extent to which even the most basic criteria for elected office were seen differently by the two races. Whereas whites gave Reagan a big edge in getting things done and being a strong leader, blacks considered him not only much more prejudiced and less hard-working, but also much less compassionate, less fair, less likely to "care about people like me," too militaristic and old-fashioned, and a weaker leader than Mondale (see Table 12). After looking at such gaps in perception, one might wonder whether black and whites were even following the same campaign and reacting to the same candidates.

Black voters were pivotal in three Senate races . . . and . . . provided the crucial margin in at least seven House races.

A small group of blacks believed Mondale to be prejudiced, which hurt him among that group. Their belief may have reflected Mondale's difficult relations with Jackson and other black leaders. In this light, it is especially important that Jackson's endorsement aided Mondale among blacks, even with other factors controlled; and Mondale's selection of Ferraro as his running mate also played well with blacks.

Looking at party identification, we see that the coefficient for Republican identification is stronger than that for Democratic identification. This may indicate that, given the vehemently hostile reactions of even black Republicans to Reagan, party identification was virtually the *only* factor retaining the votes of black Republicans in the GOP column in 1984. But it may also suggest that the allegiance of blacks to the Democratic party is less strong than is often assumed. One of the least noted trends of the 1984 campaign was the erosion of Mondale's black support after the Demo-

cratic convention. In late July, the JCPS/Gallup survey recorded 88 percent of blacks supporting Mondale; by the week of September 18, the figure had fallen to 74 percent, according to Gallup national samples. On election day Mondale's support among blacks returned to its mid-summer level, which may simply have represented a last hurrah for the old Democratic coalition, with the earlier erosion possibly the more telling phenomenon. During and after the convention, many blacks felt that Mondale was attempting to distance himself both from Jackson specifically and from blacks generally. Mondale gave short shrift to black concerns on civil rights and on helping the poor. By emphasizing issues that one does not usually associate with the Democrats, such as a tax increase and Reagan's "star wars" defense initiative, he bewildered many of his party's traditional constituencies, including blacks. The short-lived shift of the black vote away from Mondale during the early fall of 1984 may be a premonition of more substantial erosion to come. Should the Republicans begin fielding presidential candidates who are more acceptable to blacks than Reagan is, for the first time in years the Democrats might find themselves actually having to compete seriously for black votes.

The Impact of Black Voters in Congressional Elections

Viable black candidates . . . contested several congressional seats held by white incumbents.

Although blacks were unable to prevent Ronald Reagan's reelection by a landslide, the arithmetic proved more favorable to black interests in some key congressional contests. Black voters were pivotal in three Senate races: the successful reelection bids of Democrats Howell Heflin of Alabama and Carl Levin of Michigan, and Democrat Paul Simon's defeat of Republican incumbent Charles Percy of Illinois. In each case, the defeated Republican candidate received a majority of the white vote, but the black vote went so heavily for the Democrat that it provided the margin of victory. (Table 20 shows the votes by race in the Senate contests in Alabama, Michigan, and Illinois. The table also shows the votes by race for the presidency in those three states, as well as in all the other states where the black sample was large enough for the racial breakdown of the statewide vote to be accurately estimated.)

Blacks provided the crucial margin in at least seven

House races. In North Carolina, Democrats Steve Neal in the 5th district (Winston-Salem) and Bill Hefner in the 8th (Salisbury) won narrowly, thanks to the black vote. Three other southern Democrats, incumbents who had first been elected by small margins with strong black support, won comfortably in 1984, thanks to that support: Ben Erdreich in Alabama, Wayne Dowdy in Mississippi, and Robin Tallon in South Carolina each won by 12 percentage points or more, but each would have lost without the cushion provided by black voters. And in the districts represented by Bruce Morrison of Connecticut and Jim Jones of Oklahoma, blacks wield only a small share of the vote but neither incumbent could have held his seat without their support.

The Election of Black Candidates

The number of blacks holding seats in state legislatures increased by a relatively small amount.

For blacks themselves to secure and retain office, they must generally rely upon black voters. Thus, an increase in black voter participation should create a climate in which the electoral chances of black candidates would improve, all other things being equal. The excitement surrounding Jackson's presidential bid led to speculation that his presence on the primary ballot might bring enough black voters to the polls to aid black candidates for nomination and election at lower levels of office.

Viable black candidates—those with a serious chance of winning—contested several congressional seats held by white incumbents. The black challengers included Ken Spaulding and Howard Lee in North Carolina, Hosea Williams in Atlanta, Simeon Golar in the New York City borough of Queens, Israel Augustine in New Orleans, and Robert Clark in the Mississippi Delta. None of those challengers was victorious, however. In three of the races, black candidates opposed moderate white Democratic incumbents who had carefully cultivated black support over the years (Wyche Fowler in Atlanta, Joseph Addabbo in Queens, and Lindy Boggs in New Orleans). The other three cases were more idiosyncratic. Lee had not run for office since serving as mayor of Chapel Hill a decade earlier. Spaulding ran against a freshman (Tim Valentine) who

had narrowly defeated black attorney H. M. "Mickey" Michaux two years earlier. Clark faced a well-financed Republican incumbent (Webb Franklin) in a year when the Republican president was extremely popular with Mississippi's white voters.

Black congressional representation dropped from 21 to 20 as Congresswoman Katie Hall of Gary, Indiana, lost her bid for renomination in a narrow three-way primary vote. All the incumbents who were renominated won easily—even freshman Democrat Alan Wheat of Missouri, who carried his district by a two-to-one majority although its electorate is only 20 percent black.

Despite the minimal gains of blacks at the state legislative level, the signs at the grassroots are far more encouraging.

The number of blacks holding seats in state legislatures increased by a relatively small amount. Between 1982 and 1983, the number of black state legislators had jumped from 330 to 375, a gain of 45, probably because of the large increase in black turnout in 1982 and the effects of redistricting. But between 1984 and 1985, the total rose from 385 to 392, for a net gain of only 7 seats nationwide (see Table 21). The state legislative level is critical in the political career ladder, providing a base that can be parlayed into a mayoral, congressional, or statewide bid. Its importance was demonstrated by the successful Republican rebuilding program of the late 1970s, which concentrated on recruiting candidates at the state legislative level as a sort of "farm system" for higher office. Thus, the slowing of black progress at this level is a possible cause for concern (and research). Among the explanations worth considering are the following:

- In 1984, there were no state legislative elections in Alabama, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, or Virginia, all states with large contingents of black elected officials.
- In such southern states as Florida, North Carolina, and Texas, the Reagan landslide clearly produced Republican state legislative victories, lessening the prospects of black Democrats.
- Most of the black-majority districts may already have black incumbents, making future gains more difficult to achieve.

Of the 265 blacks elected to state legislatures in

November 1984, only three were Republican. Perhaps more interesting than information about the victors in contests for state legislative office are the regional variations in the race and party affiliation of those who were candidates. In such northern states as Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, the Republicans fielded almost as many black state legislative candidates as the Democrats did. But in the South, only 9 black Republicans were nominated, as opposed to 118 black Democrats. That regional difference suggests that the GOP may be pursuing a two-track strategy with regard to black candidates: grooming them to compete in heavily black districts in the North, while building a predominantly white party in the South.

Although race was one component in the vote of southern whites in 1984, it was by no means the only one and was probably not even most important.

Despite the minimal gains of blacks at the state legislative level, the signs at the grassroots are far more encouraging. The national total of black elected officials increased from 5,700 in 1984 to 6,056 in 1985 (Table 22), and virtually all of that increase took place in four categories of official: county officials (net gain of 93), mayors (31), city council members (133), and school board members (68). The increases in black county officials and black mayors were the largest ever recorded in one year. Thus, Jackson may have had coattails after all—especially since the biggest gains occurred in the South, where Jackson spent much of 1983 involved in voter registration activity. Except for California (with a net gain in black elected officials of 38), all the states with double-digit increases were in the South: Alabama (net gain of 61), Arkansas (21), Florida (36), Georgia (39), Louisiana (37), Mississippi (14), South Carolina (47), and Texas (32).

Figure 1

Determinants of Black Support for Mondale

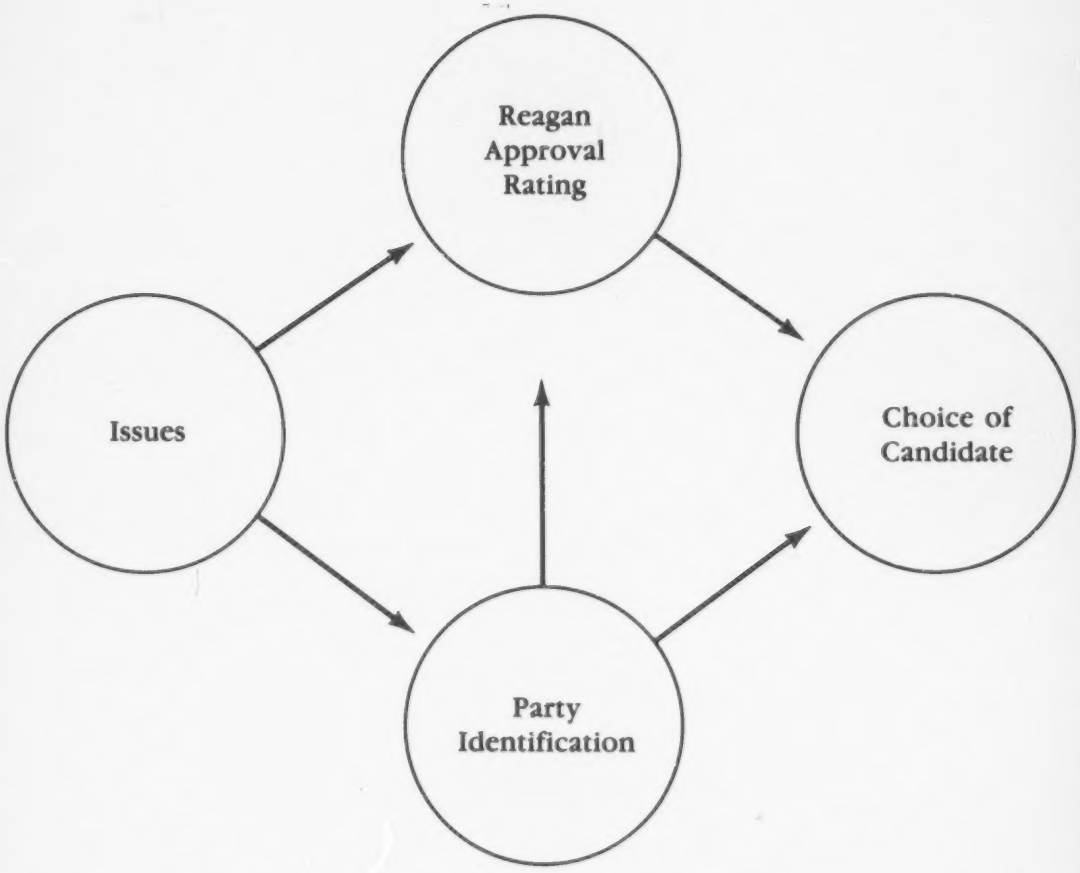

Table 19

Maximum Likelihood (Logit) Estimates of the Effects of Attitudinal Characteristics on Black Support for Mondale in the General Election

Variable	Coefficient Estimate†	Standard Error	Chi-Square	Cases in Category
Intercept	−1.121	.360	11.31*	
Democratic identification	.722	.238	9.22*	(661)
Republican identification	−1.163	.283	16.84*	(46)
Reagan job approval	− .979	.249	15.42*	(62)
Jackson endorsement makes more likely to vote for Mondale	.501	.225	4.94*	(479)
Ferraro selection makes more likely to vote for Mondale	.630	.268	5.52*	(343)
Reagan: prejudiced	.426	.225	3.57	(615)
Reagan: hard-working	− .469	.226	4.30*	(279)
Mondale: prejudiced	− .796	.232	11.79*	(114)
Mondale: strong leader	.512	.212	5.87*	(516)

* p less than .05
N = 835
144 degrees of freedom
† Reversing the signs (plus and minus) in this column would give the estimates of support for Reagan.

Table 20

Presidential and Senatorial Exit Poll Results, by Race, 1984

	Blacks as % of Votes Cast	Blacks as % of Voting-Age Pop.	Presidency, % of Votes Cast				Senate, % of Votes Cast				Senate Winner
			Black		White		Black		White		
			D	R	D	R	D	R	D	R	
National	10%	11%	89%	9%	35%	64%					
Alabama	25	23	93	6	17	82	81%	6%	46%	48%	Heflin-D
California	9	7	8	11	36	61					
Illinois	17	13	92	5	33	66	87	6	43	52	
Michigan	9	12	89	8	34	65	86	3	45	52	Simon-D
Mississippi	29	31	89	9	14	85	81	10	17	81	Levin-D
New Jersey	10	11	88	11	34	65	88	3	60	37	Cochran-R
New York	12	12	86	11	39	61					Bradley-D
North Carolina	21	20	85	12	24	76	86	13	34	64	
Ohio	13	9	87	13	32	67					Helms-R
Pennsylvania	10	10	88	9	41	59					
Texas	14	11	86	12	22	77	88	9	29	68	Gramm-R

Source: CBS-*New York Times* exit surveys.

Table 21

Black State Legislative Candidacies, by State, 1984

	Candidates		Elected Nov. 6, 1984				Total Elected in 1984	Incumbents Not up for Re-election	Post-Election Total	Pre-Election Total	Net Change
	D	R	D	R	In-cumb.	Non-Inc.					
Northeast											
Connecticut	11	7	10	0	9	1	10	0	10	10	0
Maine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Massachusetts	6	1	5	0	5	0	5	0	5	6	-1
New Hampshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Jersey*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	7	7	0
New York	22	16	20	0	18	2	20	0	20	19	+1
Pennsylvania	18	14	17	0	16	1	17	1	18	18	0
Rhode Island	4	1	4	0	3	1	4	0	4	4	0
Vermont	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
TOTAL	**62**	**39**	**57**	**0**	**52**	**5**	**57**	**8**	**65**	**65**	**0**
North Central											
Illinois	16	1	16	0	13	3	16	4	20	20	0
Indiana	9	6	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	8	0
Iowa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
Kansas	4	4	4	0	3	1	4	0	4	4	0
Michigan	14	11	14	0	14	0	14	3	17	17	0
Minnesota	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
Missouri	13	2	13	1	14	0	14	1	15	15	0
Nebraska	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
North Dakota	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ohio	11	9	11	0	11	0	11	1	12	12	0
South Dakota	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wisconsin	4	2	4	0	4	0	4	0	4	4	0
TOTAL	**73**	**36**	**72**	**1**	**69**	**4**	**73**	**10**	**83**	**83**	**0**

*No state legislative elections were held in November 1984.

cont.

Table 21 (cont.)

Black State Legislative Candidacies, by State, 1984

	Candidates		Elected Nov. 6, 1984				Total Elected in 1984	Incumbents Not up for Re-election	Post-Election Total	Pre-Election Total	Net Change
	D	R	D	R	Incumb.	Non-Inc.					
South											
Alabama*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	24	24	24	0
Arkansas	6	0	5	0	4	1	5	0	5	5	0
Delaware	3	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	3	3	0
Florida	11	2	11	0	11	0	11	1	12	12	0
Georgia	28	1	27	27	23	4	27	0	27	25	+2
Kentucky	2	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	2	4	−2
Louisiana*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	18	18	18	0
Maryland*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	24	24	24	0
Mississippi*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	20	20	0
North Carolina	16	2	16	0	10	6	16	0	16	12	+4
Oklahoma	4	0	4	0	4	0	4	1	5	5	0
South Carolina	24	0	21	0	12	9	21	0	21	21	0
Tennessee	10	1	10	0	90	1	10	3	13	13	0
Texas	13	1	13	1	11	3	14	0	14	13	+1
Virginia*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	7	7	0
West Virginia	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
TOTAL	**118**	**9**	**112**	**1**	**89**	**24**	**113**	**99**	**212**	**207**	**+5**

*No state legislative elections were held in November 1984.

cont.

Table 21 (cont.)

Black State Legislative Candidacies, by State, 1984

	Candidates		Elected Nov. 6, 1984				Total Elected in 1984	Incumbents Not up for Re-election	Post-Election Total	Pre-Election Total	Net Change
	D	R	D	R	Incumb.	Non-Inc.					
West											
Alaska	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
Arizona	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	2	0
California	7	1	7	0	7	0	7	1	8	8	0
Colorado	4	1	3	0	2	1	3	0	3	3	0
Hawaii	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Idaho	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Montana	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nevada	4	2	3	0	2	1	3	0	3	3	0
New Mexico	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oregon	3	1	3	0	2	1	3	0	3	2	+1
Utah	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
Washington	2	0	2	0	1	1	2	1	3	2	+1
Wyoming	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
TOTAL	**23**	**6**	**21**	**1**	**18**	**4**	**22**	**3**	**25**	**23**	+2
TOTAL	276	90	262	3	228	37	265	120	385	378	+7

Source: Joint Center for Political Studies.

Table 22

Number of Blacks in Selected Categories of Elected Officials, 1970-1985

	Members of Congress	State Senators	State Repre-sentatives	County Officials	Mayors	City Council Members	School Board Members	Total Black Elected Officials	% Change
1970	10	31	137	92	48	552	362	1,469	—
1971	14	36	162	120	61	653	465	1,860	26.6
1972	14	37	169	176	79	780	657	2,264	21.7
1973	16	42	196	211	82	840	744	2,621	15.8
1974	17	40	196	242	108	1,080	797	2,991	14.1
1975	18	53	223	305	135	1,237	894	3,503	17.1
1976	18	53	223	355	152	1,442	939	3,979	13.6
1977	17	56	238	381	162	1,560	994	4,311	8.3
1978	17	56	238	410	170	1,618	1,086	4,503	4.5
1979	17	70	237	398	175	1,696	1,085	4,607	2.3
1980	17	70	247	451	182	1,809	1,149	4,912	6.6
1981	18	76	257	449	204	1,818	1,211	5,038	2.6
1982	18	73	257	465	223	1,872	1,203	5,160	2.4
1983	21	85	290	496	247	2,030	1,305	5,606	8.6
1984	21	86	299	518	255	2,056	1,300	5,700	1.7
1985	20	90	302	611	286	2,189	1,368	6,056	6.2

Source: Joint Center for Political Studies.
Note: These figures include elected officials in the Virgin Islands as well as in the 50 states.

Race and Politics

The 1984 elections suggest several larger questions about race and politics. One is whether a racial backlash against black political participation is taking place, especially in the region with the greatest proportion of blacks—the South. Another is whether black candidacies for national office are feasible in the United States. A third is whether the two major political parties can draw and hold the largest constituency possible by ignoring the concerns of blacks, by catering to blacks, or by inviting and welcoming black participation.

White Backlash?

As alignments on issues change and evolve, so do the voting patterns of southern whites.

Some people have held that the Democrats seek the black vote only at their peril—that white backlash against increased black participation will cripple the Democratic party. The available data on the vote of southern whites, however, simply do not support that argument with respect to the one region where the argument could be expected to be strongest. A careful reading of survey data indicates that although race was one component in the vote of southern whites in 1984, it was by no means the only one and was probably not even most important. In fact, and perhaps surprisingly, the JCPS/ Gallup survey found no sharply hostile reaction to the Jackson campaign among southern whites. Nineteen percent of southern whites said that Jackson's endorsement of Mondale made them less likely to vote for the Democratic nominee, and 8 percent said Jackson's endorsement made them more likely to vote for Mondale. But many of the whites who responded negatively to Jackson would probably have voted against Mondale in any case, for reasons unrelated to race.

The media suggested that a "white flight" from the Democratic party was taking place in the South as black participation was becoming more visible. The CBS-*New York Times* southern exit poll results, for example, found clear racial polarization: southern whites favored Reagan by 72 to 28 percent, whereas southern

blacks supported Mondale by 89 to 9 percent. And in Alabama and Mississippi the disparity was even greater, with Reagan's white support exceeding 80 percent.

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that racial antipathy is the sole cause of southern white leanings toward the Republican party. The various reasons should be differentiated from one another because if unwarranted inferences of white backlash were drawn, the repercussions on black political influence and on the national political process could be serious.

Racial polarization was simply one among several elements contributing to the disparity between the black vote and the white vote in the South.

The first thing to note is that the current voting alignment has ample precedent. Indeed, Gallup polls in 1968 and 1972 found only 20 percent of southern whites supporting Democratic presidential nominees Hubert Humphrey and George McGovern, respectively (Table 23). But then in the 1976 presidential election and again in the 1982 midterms, a populist coalition of blacks and blue-collar whites rebounded to dominate southern politics. Thus, as alignments on issues change and evolve, so do the voting patterns of southern whites.

Second, ever since Reagan entered the White House, southern whites have consistently provided one of his most solid cores of support. The JCPS/Gallup survey showed that 73 percent of southern whites considered Reagan a strong leader, 62 percent approved of his performance as a whole, and 53 percent approved of his stand toward the Soviet union (suggesting that "standing tall for America" plays well in the South)—and in each of those cases, the percentage for southern whites considerably exceeded the figure for the national white electorate.

The third reason that the southern white electorate was heavily Republican in 1984 had to do with the relationship between economics and class voting. Reagan's economic policies were widely perceived as having aided the middle and upper classes while hurting the poor, and that perception intensified class polarization throughout the national electorate. As we have seen, the empathy that even upper-status blacks feel for the problems of the poor implies that class polarization will necessarily result in racial polarization in political attitudes. This effect is magnified in the South, where the gap between black and white in-

come levels is greater than it is elsewhere in the country. Thus, in the JCPS/Gallup survey, 57 percent of southern whites approved of Reagan's economic performance and 49 percent considered themselves better off financially since 1980, whereas 87 percent of southern blacks disapproved of Reagan's economic performance and 42 percent felt worse off financially.

Finally, not only was Reagan generally popular with southern whites, but Mondale was generally unpopular. By 46 to 36 percent, southern whites thought he was not a strong leader. Fully 54 percent thought he "owes a lot of political favors" (a question that gauges the significance of the "special interest" label). Interestingly, when asked to specify groups having "too much influence" over national policy, 59 percent of southern whites cited labor leaders—far ahead of the 30 percent who singled out blacks; and Mondale, of course, had labor support. Ferraro's nomination also cost Mondale some support among southern whites.

The [Gallup] responses indicate a clear trend of declining white hostility toward black candidates.

The vote of southern whites did, to be sure, have a racial component. Southern whites opposed preferential treatment for black job applicants by 77 to 5 percent and approved of Reagan's civil rights policies by 52 to 26 percent. Nevertheless, the data available indicate that racial antipathy was simply one among several elements contributing to the disparity between the black vote and the white vote in the South. For the Democrats to abandon a constituency that provides between one-third and one-half of their votes in the southern states to defend against what some have called "the revenge of the white male" would be foolhardy.

A Black President?

Racial antipathy may not be as dominant in the South as some have thought, but one should not extrapolate from that to the feasibility of a black person's being elected to national office—although even there, much has changed. Since 1958, Gallup has asked a standard question to measure white backlash against the presence on the ballot of black candidates: "If your party nominated a generally well-qualified man for president and he happened to be black, would you vote for him?" The responses indicate a clear trend of declining white hostility toward black candidates.

In 1958, 53 percent of the electorate said they would not support a qualified black for president, whereas 38 percent said they would. In the Gallup survey conducted for the Joint Center in 1984, only 16 percent of the electorate said they were opposed to a black candidate, whereas 77 percent professed support. (See Table 24 for the responses of the whites in the JCPS/Gallup survey.)

Those data, although showing a change over time, are nonetheless frequently misinterpreted. The "yes" response is essentially meaningless because a person can rationalize opposition to a given black candidate on the grounds that such a candidate was not "well qualified." The "no" response indicates automatic opposition to a black candidate purely on racial grounds, and it seems reasonable to assume that many or most of those who express no opinion have feelings of opposition but are too embarrassed to admit their prejudice to a pollster. (A similar phenomenon has been almost universally observed in mayoral races involving black candidates: the "undecided" vote breaks overwhelmingly for a white opponent on the day of the election.) Thus, the 16 percent "no" response in 1984 added to the 7 percent "no opinion" response yields a total of 23 percent, or almost a quarter of the electorate that we can assume would automatically oppose a black candidate. This 23 percent handicap leaves 77 percent of the electorate from which a black candidate would have to assemble a winning coalition. To secure a majority, therefore, a black presidential candidate would have to win the votes of 65 percent of that part of the electorate that did not automatically reject black candidates. But no presidential candidate since the dawn of the two-party system has won more than 61 percent of the entire vote, racist and non-racist. Thus, if one assumes the presence of a relatively normal partisan division in the non-racist electorate, one sees that white racist opposition to a black presidential candidate is currently insurmountable.

White racist opposition to a black presidential candidate is currently insurmountable.

By combining the "no" and "don't know" responses for demographic subgroups among the white electorate in the 1984 survey, we can highlight the white constituencies most and least opposed to a black presidential candidate. Racist opposition, or the handicap factor, is most apparent among southern whites

(36 percent), rural whites (30 percent), blue-collar whites (28 percent), low-income whites (37 percent), whites who never graduated from high school (40 percent), and whites age 50 and over (30 percent). Opposition is lowest among midwestern whites (17 percent), suburban whites (22 percent), college-educated whites (17 percent), upper-income whites (19 percent), whites in professional and business occupations (16 percent), and whites under the age of 30 (19 percent). Thus, the Archie Bunker or southern redneck stereotype is not far off the mark as a description of the average racist voter, while the Ann Arbor "yuppie" profile describes the white voter most likely to give a black candidate a sympathetic hearing.

Application of this analysis to the Jesse Jackson campaign yields an interesting insight. Although Jackson's emphasis on a class-based lower-income "Rainbow Coalition" of the dispossessed may have made for stirring rhetoric, it had the perverse effect of targeting his message at precisely the group of white voters least likely to respond to a black candidate under any circumstances. In contrast, the younger upscale voters supporting Gary Hart would probably have been a more fertile field. Since an informal coalition of sorts did in fact operate between the Jackson and Hart forces during the 1984 Democratic convention, the possibility may exist for an axis of agreement between black and white progressives on issues involving foreign policy, social conditions, and the political process. Indeed, on such issues as South Africa, Central America, arms control, women's rights, affirmative action, and "opening up the system" in the delegate selection process, neoliberal yuppies have views that harmonize quite well with those of the Jackson movement. (For a similar argument, see Smith and McCormick, 1985.)

By the turn of the century, a black candidate may be truly competitive for a major-party presidential nomination.

Class interests, however, put important constraints on the possibility of a "coalition of conscience" between the Jackson movement and younger whites. When economic issues dominate the political agenda, as they did for most voters in 1984, the temptation for affluent whites to vote their pocketbooks may short-circuit any attempt to forge a coalition between them and blacks. It might therefore be advantageous for progressive forces to try to shift the political agenda to issues of social justice. That strategy might at least

provide a means of deflecting the attention of whites away from the Republicans' strong suit—their growing reputation for competent economic management.

Another imponderable is the possibility that the passage of time will improve the chances of black electoral candidates. As older, less well educated whites pass out of the electorate and are presumably replaced by younger and better educated whites, the core of resistance to black candidates will shrink. By the turn of the century, a black candidate may be truly competitive for a major-party presidential nomination—in the sense that the need to write off the votes of the white racist electorate will no longer make the victory of a black candidate impossible.

Many [black Republicans and Independents] are driven to vote Democratic because of their dislike of the current administration.

The black community often complains—and, during the presidential campaign of 1984, with good reason—that one party writes the black vote off and the other takes it for granted. The two halves of the complaint are causally related: the Democrats can afford to take the black vote for granted precisely because the Republicans write it off, and the Republicans write it off because the Democrats appear to enjoy nearly unanimous support from the black community. Thus, to maximize black leverage, black leaders may wish to explore a two-pronged approach: they may have to adopt a more independent stance within the Democratic party, including running independent candidacies when conditions warrant, while showing a willingness to respond to overtures from the Republican party—should its leaders signal a desire to compete for the black vote in a credible and nonpatronizing manner.

Any possible lingering chance for detente between Reagan and the black leadership probably evaporated with attacks on the leadership emanating from both the White House and Clarence Pendleton, the controversial chairman of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, during the past year. Nevertheless, a less harsh and confrontational approach on the part of the GOP might find favor among black Republicans and Independents, many of whom are driven to vote Democratic because of their dislike of the current administration.

One reason that such an approach merits consideration by Republicans is that the recent surge in voter identification with the GOP is not likely to give the Republicans a national majority unless they can begin to make more solid inroads into the black vote. This is especially true in the South, where throughout the postwar period the Republicans first gained and then held a foothold against the Democrats by appealing to racial backlash. In many parts of the South the GOP now faces a unified black opposition that constitutes one-third to one-half of the electorate. But for Republicans to retain 70 percent or more of the white vote in the South for any length of time is inconceivable, given the likelihood that in an economic downturn the populist coalition of blacks and blue-collar whites that was decisive in many southern elections in 1976 and 1982 would be recreated. Thus, to guard against the possible defection of blue-collar whites from its southern coalition, the GOP will have to increase its share of the black vote.

Another reason the Republicans might want increased black participation in their party is that younger, more moderate white voters may be put off by the perception that the Republican party is anti-black. Liking the Republican message of economic conservatism, those white voters might dislike the party's reactionary stance on social issues. Here, too, increased black participation could be an important asset to the Republicans.

Many [black Democrats] are upset that their party appears to be ignoring their concerns.

For whatever reason, a number of GOP leaders have recently made gestures toward overcoming the party's "anti-black" image. The statements of Minnesota Congressman Vin Weber on South Africa, of Labor Secretary William Brock on affirmative action, and of Maryland Senator Charles Mathias on his opposition to the nomination of William Bradford Reynolds to be Deputy Attorney General provide some interesting straws in the wind, as does Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole's well-received address to the National Urban League in July 1985. Moreover, the Republican National Committee has intervened in a North Carolina case as a friend of the court on behalf of the proponents of voting rights, which suggests that Republican policies at the national level may well be less hostile to black interests, as the party begins its transition to the post-Reagan era.

The other prong of a possible new approach for black leaders to take is independent candidacies, and this option, too, is receiving increased attention. Although the constituency for a separate black party remains fairly limited (favored by only 13 percent of blacks in the JCPS/Gallup survey), independent candidacies launched on a selective basis for tactical reasons might be received more positively. The National Black Election Study conducted by the University of Michigan found that 57 percent of blacks reported they would vote for Jackson if he ran as an independent candidate for the presidency (Brown, 1985, p. 9). And in the dozen or so congressional districts in the South that are represented by boll weevil Democrats, black candidates might well have a better chance to win by running as independents in three-way races than by entering black-vs.-white Democratic primaries. The recent controversy over the run-off primary as being possibly discriminatory has highlighted the lack of support for black candidates from white Democratic voters. As long as that pattern continues, blacks may have little to lose and much to gain from challenging the usual two-party way of doing things, especially in the South. Certainly, the signals emanating from the Democratic National Committee since the 1984 presidential election give little evidence that the Democratic party, in attempting to redefine its philosophy, is accepting blacks as major players; and since blacks have contributed 20 to 25 percent of the national Democratic vote for the past two decades, many of them are upset that their party appears to be ignoring their concerns.

Below the national level, developments . . . point to important black political advances in the years to come.

The crux of the matter is the nature of black influence within the Democratic party. At the level of national leadership, black participation is visible but not especially efficacious. The most powerful message of the Jackson candidacy was the rejection of precisely that kind of black dependence upon the good will of white leadership. For that reason, Jackson was an especially threatening figure to the Democratic National Committee and to the Mondale campaign, which had no desire (and little incentive) to accept a black political presence as a coequal, autonomous partner in the Democratic coalition.

The conflict between articulating black interests and

acquiescing in the strategic needs of the white-dominated party organization—so well personified in the fight between Richard Hatcher, mayor of Gary, Indiana, and Roland Burris, comptroller of the state of Illinois, for Democratic national vice chairman—is a recurring tension in black political praxis (see, for example, Carmichael and Hamilton, 1967, ch. 3). The debate will continue to divide black political elites along generational lines; it will also continue to pit black electoral and party leaders who are dependent on white constituent and financial support against indigenous community and religious leaders, who played a key networking role in the Jackson campaign.

Neither party will be able to afford to ignore the black vote for long.

Below the national level, developments are taking place that point to important black political advances in the years to come. The networks of black political activists forged by the Jackson campaign are likely to remain active, both nationally and locally, and the enormous increase in black registration plus the impressive gains in the number of blacks elected to local office are laying the groundwork for major growth in black political participation. It is safe to say that neither party will be able to afford to ignore the black vote for long.

Table 23

Southern Presidential Voting, by Race, 1960-1984

	Black			White		
	D	R	Other	D	R	Other
1960	62%	26%	—	45%	43%	—
1964	94	0	—	52	38	—
1968	81	10	3%	20	36	38%
1972	66	27	—	20	75	1
1976	79	12	2	48	45	2
1980	90	5	1	40	45	6
1984	82	14	—	26	69	—

Source: Final pre-election surveys by the Gallup Organization.
Note: The percentages do not add up to 100 because of the people who were undecided.

Table 24

Whites' Willingness to Vote for Black Presidential Candidate, by Demographic Category, 1984

	(N)	Yes	No	Don't Know
All whites	(1,365)	75%	18%	7%
Age 18-29	(256)	81	13	6
Age 30-49	(501)	75	16	9
Age 50 and over	(606)	70	23	7
East	(347)	74	16	10
Midwest	(371)	83	13	4
South	(362)	64	25	11
West	(285)	79	15	6
Central city	(332)	76	14	10
Suburban	(502)	78	14	8
Rural	(531)	70	24	6
Not high school grad.	(256)	60	28	12
High school grad.	(567)	74	17	9
College	(541)	83	12	5
Professional/business	(252)	84	11	5
Clerical/sales	(148)	81	12	7
Blue collar	(338)	72	17	11
Unemployed	(110)	72	21	7
Under $12,000	(308)	63	28	9
$12,000 to $24,999	(427)	76	15	9
$25,000 and over	(530)	81	14	5
Owner	(1,021)	74	18	8
Renter	(340)	75	16	9

Source: JCPS/Gallup survey.

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